



Mémoire du

Sierra Club Québec

Soumis a

L'Office de Consultation Publique de Montréal

Dans le cadre du

PLAN DE DÉVELOPPEMENT URBAIN, ÉCONOMIQUE ET SOCIAL POUR LES QUARTIERS AUX ABORDS DE L'ÉCHANGEUR TURCOT

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This brief is presented by Sierra Club Quebec, (Land Stewardship committee) a volunteer environmental organization that has existed in Quebec since approximately the year 2000. Quebec is one of five sections of Sierra Club Canada which was founded in British Columbia in 1969 to fight clear-cut logging which was proposed for Vancouver Island.

The Sierra Club was originally founded in California by Scottish naturalist John Muir in 1892 as a hiking club for mountain lovers but with time the club became a leader in the movement to preserve North America's natural spaces. Today Sierra Club is recognized around the world as one of the foremost and important environmental organizations in the world.

Sierra Club Quebec follows in this rich tradition and over the last several years has submitted briefs to the OCPM, the CMM and several municipalities in an effort to preserve land and the biodiversity found within it and to create a large network of park space for the benefit of all Montrealers.

Turcot and the Sierra Club

During the past number of years Sierra Club Quebec has participated in several events and has presented a number of briefs that have touched upon the Turcot Yards and subsequently upon the neighbourhoods that border the Turcot Yards.

On February 3, 2015 La Direction des grands parcs et du verdissement and Convergite hosted a workshop which Sierra Club attended along with other groups, including Green Coalition Verte and Les Amis du Parc Meadowbrook. There were approximately 25 to 30 people present at this event. Sierra Club felt that there was a consensus that Turcot become a re-naturalized area and yet several years later we still have not seen a final report of this event.

More recently I represented Sierra Club and attended another workshop in the southwest where we discussed the future of the districts of St-Henri, Emard and Cote St-Paul. Following the workshop Sierra Club submitted a brief on the subject of **Quartiers voisinant Turcot; St-Henri Ouest, Emard, Cote Saint-Paul. A copy of the brief is attached with this .document. At the time of the workshop, and again in the brief, I explained that one could not discuss a district without considering what surrounded the area.**

I described four possibilities for the future of the Turcot Yards and I tied the possibilities to a presentation given by Dr Francois Reeves during a presentation given to Bois de l'Équerre in Laval. (<http://www.boisdelequerre.org>). The Turcot Yards could become either a residential neighbourhood, a commercial zone, an industrial zone or a park space and Dr Reeves showed that the difference in temperature between an industrial area and a forest area would be within the range of 41 degrees and 27 degrees.

If the Turcot Yards was converted to a park then the neighbouring areas, the subject of this OCPM hearings, would benefit from the green space. The trees in the park would serve as a buffer and dampen the noise from the new highway and rail line at the foot of the Falaise St-Jacques. The trees would serve as a filter to help clean the air and the trees and park space would help to make the surrounding areas cooler.

Finally, in the brief submitted by Sierra Club Quebec to the Communauté métropolitaine de Montréal on September 13, 2011, the importance of green space is noted in the section “What value a forest?”. In the appendix of the PMAD document the Sierra Club includes a map and recommends saving the Turcot Yards as a re-naturalized green space connected to a much larger network of green spaces.

http://projet.pmad.ca/fileadmin/user_upload/pmad2011/memoire/M080_Sierra-club_Memoire.pdf

Our basic needs



Maslow's Hierarcht of Needs

Every human being has basic needs but most of us do not even think of them because for most of us they are satisfied. Almost every university degree covers some aspect of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs but recently academics are studying the need for green spaces or natural spaces. Among the basic needs more and more we are realizing that human beings have a need to be in contact with nature.

In an urban setting, especially in neighbourhoods like St-Henri, Emard, Cote St-Paul and the southern portion of Notre-Dame-de-Grace and Hochelaga-Maisonneuve (the latter two areas are not the subject of this OCPM mandate) a large wooded area would provide great benefit to the population. The map and the accompanying charts that follow indicate lower household income for the neighbourhoods being considered by these hearings.

The citizens who reside in neighbourhoods such as Westmount, Cote St-Luc, Hampstead and the northern portions of Notre-Dame-de-Grace have easier and more regular access to nature than the citizens who live in areas targeted by

these hearings. Richard Louv writes about our need to access nature¹ and Dr Scott Sampson repeats many of the same arguments.²

Montreal, a moral responsibility



**Montreal welcomes the offices of the United Nations Secretariat for the Convention on Biological Diversity.
The Convention on Biological Diversity demands a minimum protection of 17 percent**

This is a recurring theme in almost every brief that Sierra Club Quebec has submitted; that is, the preservation of the last natural spaces remaining on the island of Montreal. Montreal claims that currently 6 percent of the land surface is protected and the city administration has set a target of protecting 10 percent. In order to reach this target Montreal will need to protect another 2,000 hectares of land but there is not sufficient remaining green spaces on the island of Montreal to attain this goal.

¹ Last Child in the Woods : Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder, Richard Louv, Algonquin Books, April 2005

² How to Raise a Wild Child : The Art and Science of Falling in Love with Nature, Scott Sampson, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, March 10 2015

To reach the stated goal Montreal must protect all remaining natural spaces³. In addition Montreal must naturalize some areas that are not currently green to obtain their target. The Turcot Yards would be an ideal area to begin with and .it would be the crowning jewel of a network of green spaces for the center of the island. Refer to the map in the appendix that shows the details of a network of large natural spaces connected together by “des trame-verte” and which runs from Meadowbrook to the Saint Lawrence river.

East meets West in the Middle

The Sierra Club envisions three large parks on the island of Montreal (east, west and central) which are inspired by the Saguaro National Park system located in Tucson, Arizona. Saguaro, in fact, is two parks located on the east and west sides of Tucson. The idea for Montreal would be on a much smaller scale but would be just as attractive to its citizens and it could become a world class tourist attraction for bird watchers and nature lovers.

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The danger of gentrification

With improvements to a neighbourhood there comes the danger of gentrification and the danger that long time residents may be pushed out from the neighbourhood that has been home for many years. This

³ Richard Bergeron, Montreal executive Committee member in response to question by Mayor Paola Hawa, November 7, 2014

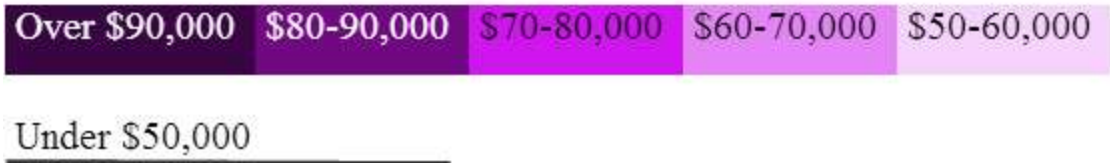
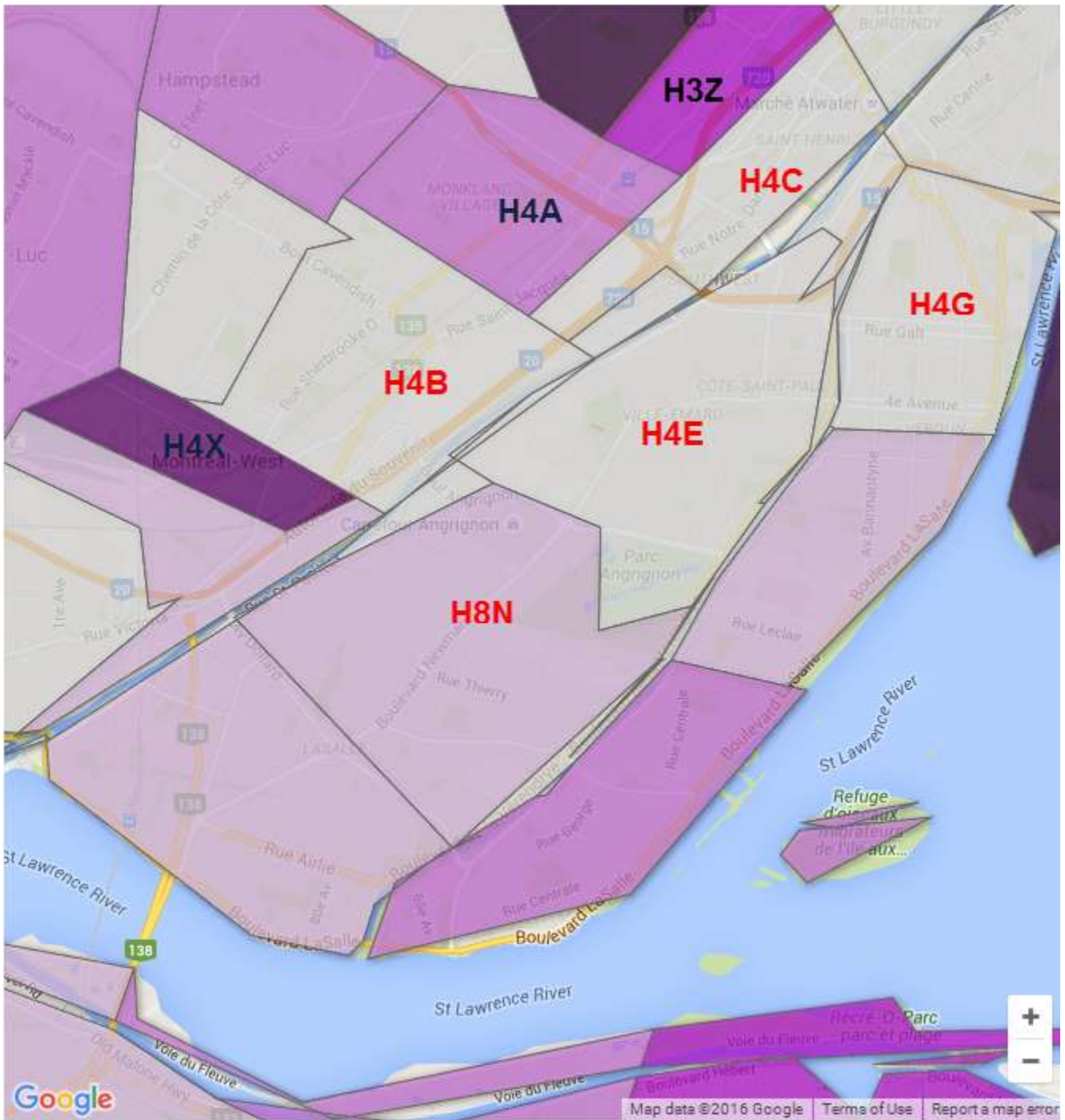
phenomenon has been observed in parts of St-Henri and is occurring in Hochelaga Maisonneuve. Where will the residents go from here?

Sierra Club Quebec does not pretend to have a solution but we feel that it is important to make this observation. Anecdotal evidence states that some lower income families are being forced to move to areas such as St-Jerome where rental units are available at a lower rate. This is not scientific evidence but it may be real and should be considered in any decision process.

Conclusions

With several small changes and one addition (point 7) these conclusions are similar to those presented in a document presented previously to the OCPM.

- 1. The Communauté métropolitaine de Montréal, in the PMAD document, promised Montrealers a green belt and the connection of Meadowbrook, the Falaise Saint-Jacques, a renaturalized Turcot Yards, Angrignon Park, the Douglas Hospital grounds and finishing on the St-Lawrence River with the green space along Lasalle boulevard and Parc des Rapides will give a boost to the citizens of the southwest region of Montreal and to its economy.**
- 2. The residents of the neighbourhoods that are identified in this document and which border the Turcot Yards do not necessarily have the means to travel to natural spaces and the concept of a central Montreal green belt will provide then unprecedented access to nature.**
- 3. A central Montreal green belt would provide an incentive for people living outside of Montreal to visit. Compare Montreal to Chicago with its vast park space along Lake Michigan. Chicago is not necessarily a beautiful city but that park space never fails to seduce.**
- 4. The recreational and health benefits for the residents would be immeasurable. The cleaner and cooler air and the reduction in noise levels from the highways would be a great health benefit.**
- 5. The reduction in the number of heat islands on the island of Montreal would have a benefit for all Montrealers.**
- 6. The recreational value of the park would be a benefit to all.**
- 7. The resulting network of parks could become a world class tourist attraction and could result in a tremendous boost to the economy of the region.**



Median salary by postal code; see accompanying chart on next page.¹ Postal codes highlighted in red would most benefit from the Turcot Yards being converted into a large park for all Montrealers.

FSA		Median Family Income	Median for Canada
H3J	Petite-Bourgogne	43,412	66,343
H3K	Pointe-Saint-Charles	40,514	
H3Y	Westmount	220,578	
H4A	Notre-Dame-de-Grace	69,952	
H4B	Notre-Dame-de-Grace (south)	42,291	
H4C	Saint-Henri	40,362	
H4E	Ville-Emard	45,482	
H4G	Verdun	39,135	
H4H	Verdun	53,554	
H4V	Cote St-Luc (east)	47,920	
H4X	Montreal West	87,904	
H8N	Lasalle (northwest)	53,795	
H8P	Lasalle (southeast)	60,445	
H3Z	Westmount (south)	79,432	

Median salary by postal code; Postal codes highlighted in red would most benefit from the Turcot Yards being converted into a large park for all Montrealers.

